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ABSTRACT

This document reviews the literature on elementary and secondary school dropouts and notes the effects and possible solutions to the dropout problem. Statistical findings about dropouts from the 1960's to the present are presented along with methods of predicting who the dropouts will be. Dropout characteristics, including psychological, social, academic and vocational, are described. The impact of dropping out on income and occupation, as well as the effect on the family and society, is discussed. The remainder of the materials is divided according to dropout programs including alternative schools, adult counseling, peer counseling, vocational education and work study programs. A glossary and annotated bibliography are also provided. (JAC)

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THE SCHOOL DROPOUT: CAUSES, EFFECTS AND SOLUTIONS

By

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INTRODUCTION

> A dropout most often designates an elementary or secondary pupil who has been in membership during the regular school term and who withdraws or is dropped from membership for any reason except death or transfer to another school before graduating from secondary school (grade 12) or before completing an equivalent program of studies; such an individual is considered a dropout whether his dropping out occurs during or between regular school terms, whether it occurs before or after he has passed the compulsory school attendance age, and where applicable, whether or not he has completed a minimum required amount of school work. (Good:198)

High school dropouts have concerned teachers, parents and community leaders for a number of years. There are countless individual reasons that students do not graduate from high school. Large sums of money have been spent on programs designed to encourage these students to remain in school. Typically, efforts have focused on modifying the curriculum, creating alternative schools, and providing work experience opportunities.

The minimum age for school attendance was raised to sixteen in a number of states by the mid-twentieth century. As a result of compulsory attendance laws, the schools inherited a problem. A corollary of required schooling was dropouts. When surveyed at the turn of the century, students gave reasons for dropping out, such as poor health, lack of interest, and the need of their services at home. These reasons have changed somewhat since that time. (Hunt:238)

Daniel Schreiber, one of the leading authorities on the topics of dropouts, described the need to coax and persuade potential dropouts to stay in school in Profile of the School Dropout:

> The United States cannot afford to have almost one million youths drop out of school each year to become unwanted and unemployed.... We must reconstruct our education system to provide relevant, successful experiences for all children so that they will become and remain an integral part of our society. (Schreiber:7)

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many students leave school before completing twelve years of study. The problem of high school dropouts has been the focus of educators and research since the turn of the century.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to identify dropout characteristics and note the effects and possible solutions to the dropout problem, and thereby provide information to educators and others dealing with these students.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The first part of the study dealt with statistical findings about dropouts from the 1960's to the present. Dropout rates were presented along with methods of predicting who the dropouts of the future will be.

In the second part, dropout characteristics were presented. Research included the psychological, social, academic, and vocational characteristics of the dropout and potential dropout.

The third section dealt with the impact of dropping out. Discussed were income and occupational effects, as well as the impact dropouts had on society and the family. Teacher influences were also presented.

The remainder of the study was divided according to the five types of programs offered the dropout and potential dropout. Included were alternative schools, adult counseling, peer counseling, vocational education, and work-study programs undertaken by schools and various interested groups. Entries in each section have been alphabetized under subdivisions.

GLOSSARY

absence -- "the failure of a pupil to be present at school; generally understood as failure to be present at more than half the session." (Good:2)

administrator -- "a generic term referring to the person responsible for the total administration of an educational system, institution, or division of either." (Good:15)

aptitude -- "a group of characteristics deemed to be symptomatic of an individual's ability to acquire proficiency in a given area." (Good:37)

CAP -- Career Awareness Program

CEC -- Career Education Center

CIP -- Career Intern Program

concrete -- "referring to an object or idea familiar to the individual through experience." (Good:125)

control group -- "the one of two or more groups that is not subjected to the experimental factor or condition introduced into the treatment of the experimental group; the group with which the experimental group or groups are compared." (Good:267)

counselor -- "one who assists individual students to make adjustments and choices especially in regard to vocational, educational, and personal matters." (Good:146)

disadvantaged -- "a child who has an impoverished range of experience and whose physical needs are usually met at a mere subsistence level." (Good:95)

educators -- "one who teaches, instructs, or otherwise contributes to the educational development of others." (Good:206)

ethnic group -- "a fairly distinct cultural group whether racial national or tribal." (Good:267)

extracurricular activities -- "the area of the total curriculum which includes experiences not usually provided in typical classes." (Good:9)

failure -- "lack of success on the part of a pupil in the accomplishment of a school task." (Good:234)

grade point average (GPA) -- "a measure of average scholastic success in all school subjects taken by a student during a certain term or semester." (Good:53)

graduate -- "an individual who has satisfactorily completed all requirements of an educational program and has been awarded a diploma or certificate attesting to this." (Good:264)

HOLD -- Help Overcome Learner Dropouts

hypothesis -- "an informed guess about the solution to a problem or about a general rule which describes the common elements characterizing a series of instances." (Good:289)

IIP -- Individualized Instruction Program

individualized instruction -- "a type of teaching-learning in which the teacher gives consideration to the individual learner." (Good:305)

inferiority complex -- "a repressed complex of feelings and emotions, stemming usually from experienced organ inferiority." (Good:122)

intelligence -- "the ability to learn and to criticize what is learned; the ability to deal effectively with tasks involving abstractions; the ability to learn from experience and to deal with new situations." (Good:309)

intelligence quotient (IQ) -- "a measure for expressing level of mental development in relation to chronological age." (Good:465)

junior high students -- "children enrolled in a course of study in grades seven, eight and nine." (Good:322)

KAPS -- Keeping All Pupils in School

mainstream -- "that part of the total public school program not concerned with special education services for exceptional children." (Good:347)

mean -- "a measure of central tendency which is obtained from the sum of measures, observations, magnitudes, items or scores in a statistical series, divided by their number or frequency." (Good:356)

minority group -- "one of the groups classified according to race, religion, or nationality whose membership is less than 50 percent of a given population." (Good:268)

NCA -- North Central Association

occupational level -- "the position of an individual's occupation in a scale of occupations graded on an economic, social, or intelligence basis." (Good:395)

peer relationships -- "relationships with individuals of one's own group; commonly used to indicate especially relationships with a child's or youth's own age groups." (Good:488)

positive reinforcement -- "increase in response strength brought about by the kinds of reinforcers that satisfy drives." (Good:487)

potential dropout -- "a student identified as one who may leave an educational program prior to graduation." (Good:198)

ratio -- "an ordered set of two or more numbers which represent the relative sizes of certain numbers or quantities." (Good:469)

remedial instruction -- "specific instruction based on comprehensive diagnostic findings and intended to overcome any particular learning deficiency of a pupil." (Good:306)

role playing -- "a method for developing insights into human relationships by acting out certain behavior in situations that are similar to real life." (Good:502)

self-concept -- "the individual's perception of himself as a person, which includes his abilities, appearance, performance in his job and other phases of daily living." (Good:524)

self-confidence -- "faith in one's own ability." (Good:524)

self-esteem -- "the judgment and attitude an individual holds toward himself." (Good:525)

sibling -- "one of two or more children who is biologically defined as brother or sister, either full or half." (Good:533)

social class -- "a group of individuals in a society who accept each other as equals, the concept of equality being mediated by or hinging upon similarities in such respects as mode of living, behavior form, material possessions, status of ancestors, type of occupation, and amount and kind of education, as well as other prestige-yielding qualities." (Good:539)

socioeconomic background -- "the background or environment indicative of both the social or economic status of an individual or group." (Good:542)

standardized test -- "a test for which content has been selected and checked empirically, for which norms have been established, for which uniform methods of administration and scoring have been developed, and which may be scored with a relatively high degree of objectivity." (Good:603)

Stride -- Students and Teachers Really Interested in Dropout Education

suspension -- "the temporary, forced withdrawal of a pupil from school, resorted to by school officials for various disciplinary and other reasons." (Good:577)

tardiness -- "the act or state of being late; in school the term refers to a pupil's failure to be in a prescribed place, ready to begin work, at a prescribed time." (Good:584)

truant -- "a youth who is absent from school without the knowledge and consent of his parents." (Good:625)

United States Office of Education -- "a division of the Federal government, within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, established by Congress in 1867 for the purpose of advancing the cause of education throughout the nation." (Good:632)

variable -- "any trait that changes from one case or condition to another; more strictly, the representation of the trait, usually in quantitative form, such as a measurement or an enumeration." (Good:638)

vocational training -- "on-the-job training and experiences which contribute to the students' preparation for occupational adjustment." (Good:620)

WECEP -- Work Experience and Career Exploration Program

withdrawal -- "a pupil who has withdrawn from membership in a class, grade, or school by transferring, by completing schoolwork, by dropping out, or by dying." (Good:649)

YIEP -- Youth Incentive Entitlement Program

ANNOTATIONS

STATISTICAL FINDINGS

Rate of Dropouts

Grant, W. Vance, "Estimates of School Dropouts," American Education, 11:back cover, May, 1975.

Grant noted that although the percentage of dropouts declined since the early 1960's, one-fourth of the young people in the United States today do not graduate from high school.

Kaplan, Jay L., and Luck, Edward C., "The Dropout Phenomenon as a Social Problem," Educational Forum, 42:41-56, November, 1977.

Kaplan and Luck reported that approximately eight million students dropped out of school without receiving a high school diploma in the decade of the 1960's. Only 78.7 percent of the high school students who enrolled in 1967 graduated in the 1970-1971 school year. Males accounted for 52 percent of all dropouts. Relative to population, racial minorities are grossly over-represented. Minorities made up only 31 percent of the total dropout picture in 1970.

Palmo, Artis J.; Buehle, Paul; and Osswald, Helene, "A Career Awareness Program for High School Dropouts," Journal of Employment Counseling, 17:277-286, June, 1980.

As of 1977, the authors reported statistics from the United States Office of Education that showed 850,000 students dropped out of high school every year.

Stoughton, Charles R., and Grady, Beverly R., "How Many Students Will Drop Out and Why?" North Central Association Quarterly, 53:312-315, Fall, 1978.

The authors cited serious flaws in current methods of predicting dropout rates. Most studies done focused on the secondary school. The students never enrolled in high school were not counted in the tally. In 1972 Stoughton studied dropouts in Arizona. The purpose was to obtain a clear picture of the state's dropouts and to produce four years of data. Each principal in all schools filled out a form on each student which noted sex, grade level, reason for withdrawal, student enrollment of the school, and ethnic origin. A 10.2 percent annual dropout rate was computed for four years. School size was found to influence the rate. The highest rate of dropouts was in schools with enrollments of 1,000 to 1,500 students. Schools with enrollment up to 200, the dropout rate was half. According to ethnicity, blacks ranked highest, followed by American Indians and Mexican-Americans. The rate of dropouts in the New Mexico study was 5.98 percent. The only difference cited according to ethnicity was the American Indian had a higher percentage dropout rate than blacks. More males than females were enrolled at every grade level but the male rate was 55 percent in Arizona and 53.3 percent in New Mexico. The majority of the dropouts occurred in tenth and eleventh grade.

Wacker, Gabrielle Banick, "Vocational Education's Role in Serving Dropouts and Potential Dropouts," Journal for Vocational Special Needs Education, 4:19-22, Fall, 1981.

Wacker reported that 23 percent of all high school students dropped out of school in 1979.

Prediction of Dropouts

Lloyd, Dee N., "Concurrent Predictions of Dropout and Grade of Withdrawal," Educational and Psychological Measurement, 36:983-990, Winter, 1976.

Lloyd proposed an extension of previous studies to determine whether variables based on information at the sixth grade level would predict the grade that students withdrew in high school. The study followed 507 dropouts. The most common reason for withdrawal listed on school records was "16 years of age or over." A total of 20 independent variables used were obtained from permanent record cards. Age, retentions, educational level and occupation of mother and father, number of siblings, marital status of parents, grade point averages, absences, and standardized test scores were examples of information used in the study. Fifteen of the twenty sixth grade measures were significantly related to the grade of withdrawal. Standardized test scores, grades received in sixth grade, absences, and age were the four variables in combination that produced a significantly higher prediction than any single variable. Only the education of the father and number of siblings were found to be significant family background measures in the study.

Lloyd, Dee N., "Prediction of School Failure from Third Grade Data," Educational and Psychological Measurement, 38:1193-1200, Winter, 1978.

The same students used in the sixth grade study were used by Lloyd for the third grade study. The number of non-promotions in elementary school was represented by age in months in the third grade. The measures of socio-economic background were the educational levels of both the father and mother and the occupational level of the father. Measures of family characteristics were the number of siblings of the student and marital status of the parents. Measures of school performance and behavior were the averaged grades of the students and the number of days absent in the third grade. Lloyd reported the results showed graduation from high school associated with younger age, higher occupational and educational levels of parents, fewer siblings, more complete homes, higher subject marks, higher standardized test scores, and fewer retentions between first and third grades. Absence was the only factor not significantly related to dropout or graduation. A 75 percent correct classification of dropouts and graduates was found. Six or seven of every ten later school failures were correctly classified by characteristics shown in the third grade.

DROPOUT CHARACTERISTICS AND REASONS

Carriere, Robert H., "Peer Violence Forces Kids Out of School," American School Board Journal, 166:35-36, January, 1979.

According to Carriere, many students left school because of peer violence. The students did not worry about an education; they were worried about preservation. No school in North America escaped this condition. Survival was a key word. Students did not mention the violence as a reason for their leaving but made up other excuses. The conclusion of Carriere's doctoral study showed that nine percent of the males dropped because of peer group violence. The study used former dropouts who were enrolled in night school. These students stated that many administrators kept the violence problems quiet to protect the name of the school. These same students noted that teachers and administrators were much more effective protection for students than police. Carriere concluded that schools adopt and enforce a strict policy to protect student rights to attend school without fear of violence.

Cottle, Thomas J., "A Case of Suspension," National Elementary Principal, 55:4-9, September-October, 1975.

Cottle reported millions of students were being suspended from school. Reasons found for the suspensions were truancy, tardiness, fighting, smoking, and destruction of property. Cases of drugs, alcohol, and dress codes were found to account for only a small percentage of cases. During the 1972-1973 school year, Cottle reported almost 20,000 students were suspended in New York City, 9,000 in Houston, and 11,000 in Cleveland. In Denver, 50 percent of the white boys and 31 percent of the black girls had been suspended twice as often as other students. Among all school age children between the ages of 12 and 17, almost eight percent had been suspended at least once. Black children were suspended three times as often as white children and for longer periods of time. In New York, 86 percent of the suspensions were minorities and in Dallas, 70 percent were minorities. The major reason found for a suspension was to bring the child's parents into the school. But the study showed 33 percent of the students returned without the parents being involved. The statistics also showed the more times a student was suspended the more likelihood there was of the student dropping out. Only 4.6 percent of 1,252 children studied were at proper grade level.

Curley, Theodore J., The Social System: Contributor or Inhibitor to the School Dropout, ED 049 344, United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C., March, 1971, 16 pp.

Curley reported on the Quincy Public School System's study. The aim of the research was to determine why the student left school. Curley found that the lower class children left school early. At the sixth grade level an increase in absenteeism was noticed for dropouts and continued even higher with each grade level. The dropout experienced academic difficulty and failure in elementary school. Curley also found that almost 60 percent of the school leavers in the Quincy study had been retained one or more times as opposed to the students still in school. Dropouts were described as being negative by the teachers in the lower grades. In a follow-up study, 29 percent of the dropouts had resumed their education.

Dean, Kenny S., "A Plan to Save Dropouts: School-within-a-School," The Clearing House, 48:98-99, October, 1973.

Dean closely inspected data and discovered several reasons for students dropping out. Those students did not fit well both socially and academically in high school. There were little or no provisions made in the curriculum for a student who was not planning on attending college. The students also found that the only success at school was failure. Other problems included: excessive absenteeism, discipline problems at school, trouble with the law, low grades, divorced parents, living with relatives, and teacher apathy. The students who dropped out of school had had three or more of the problems listed above. The three most common elements, however, were excessive absenteeism, low achievement, and discipline referrals to the principal. The data was from an urban school of approximately 1,500 students in Paducah, Kentucky.

Hammontree, Tom, "Profile of a Dropout," Florida Vocational Journal, 3:26-28, April, 1978.

Hammontree profiled psychological and social characteristics exhibited by Coral Gables, Florida dropouts. Discipline problems increased noticeably around ninth grade. Grades began to drop in junior high. Intelligence was low-average. Reading problems were noted on the school records. The student appeared to have ability, but did not apply the ability. There was a lack of interest in academic activities. The dropout often had problems at home, conflict with parents, and low self-esteem. Poor work habits were another reason cited. A higher than average rate of absenteeism was also noted. Hammontree also supplemented the report with statistics of the study. The average dropout age was 16.9. Sixty-nine percent of the dropouts were male, 31 percent female. The average student who dropped out was absent 36 percent of the time. Average reading and numerical computation level was a stanine 4, equivalent to an IQ of about 91. Only 65 percent of dropouts lived with both parents, while 35 percent lived with one parent. Most dropouts came from families with incomes under $10,000. Although there were many reasons students left school before graduating, the main factor was the inability to read.

Hewitt, John D., and Johnson, William S., "Dropping Out in Middletown," The High School Journal, 62:252-256, March, 1979.

Hewitt and Johnson explored data on dropouts in Muncie, Indiana. Prior to the 1930's economic pressures were cited as the number one reason for leaving school. This reason decreased in the latter 1930's and 1940's. Between 1952 and 1977, different patterns emerged. In 1952, 48 percent of the dropouts cited the dislike of school as the reason for withdrawing. By 1977 the tally reached 56 percent. A third more males than females cited personal dislike for school as the reason for dropping out. Even though every person gave more than one reason for leaving school, the dislike of school was the only one mentioned 100 percent of the time. Sixty percent of the dropouts received grades of "C" or below, 61 percent were not involved in any extracurricular activities, and 40 percent indicated no involvement in community activities. About 70 percent of the dropouts' fathers and 60 percent of the mothers had not finished high school. Ninety percent of the dropouts reported a self-perceived middle class or below standing and 30 percent put themselves in the lower middle or working class. The largest proportion of those withdrawing in 1977 was female.

Hill, C. Russell, "Capacities, Opportunities, and Educational Investments: The Case of the High School Dropout," The Review of Economics and Statistics, 61:9-20, February, 1979.

Hill chose male individuals between the ages of 14 and 17 who were enrolled in high school in 1966 for a study to determine factors associated with dropping out. Hill found that the higher the educational attainment of the parents, the lower the probability of dropping out. However, only the mother's educational attainment was found to have a significant effect on dropping out for the non-white male. In contrast, mother's education, father's education, number of siblings, and the average income of the family were four variables that had a significant effect on the dropout rate for white youths. IQ had the most important effect on dropouts for whites while knowledge of the labor market was most important for non-whites. The actual state of the local job market and the demand for teenaged labor reduced the probability of dropping out for both racial groups. The quality of high school attended did not have a direct effect on dropouts in either racial group. Enrollment in a vocational or commercial curriculum lowered the probability of dropping out. These students who were grade levels behind in school were found to drop out sooner than those who were on level. The greater the number of siblings these students had, the greater was the likelihood that they dropped out.

Hinkley, Ed., "An Instructional Program for Dropouts," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 63:59-64, February, 1979.

Hinkley discussed six characteristics or attitudes of the potential dropout. The students were defensive and verbally abusive, pessimistic toward life, and anything they tried to do ended in failure. Many of the students felt helpless about their home life as well as school life. The pupils also felt that they did not receive support from teachers and administrators. Another characteristic cited by the author was their emotional dependency upon others, lack of security, and inability to ask for help. The students then created school problems. Another trait identified was that the students had inferiority complexes and were afraid to try. A fifth characteristic was the need for immediate, concrete rewards. Finally, a sixth attitude was the students' lack of trust for teachers and administrators.

Kaplan, Jay L., and Luck, Edward C., "The Dropout Phenomenon as a Social Problem," Educational Forum, 42:41-56, November, 1977.

Kaplan and Luck summarized several characteristics of dropouts. Most dropouts had poor attendance records, had serious academic problems, and followed general course work in high school. Studies revealed that 50 percent of dropouts were retained at least once. The study showed that 25 percent of the dropouts had been suspended and another 20 percent caused some kind of trouble in the classroom. Dropping out was shown to be strongly related to the educational attainment of parents. Eighty percent of all fathers and 70 percent of all mothers never completed high school. Two-thirds of the parents of dropouts studied held indifferent attitudes toward the value of education. Finally, small rural and large urban school districts tended to have a lower holding power rate than schools of intermediate size and location.

Kowalski, Casimer, and Cangemi, Joseph P., "High School Dropouts -- A Lost Resource," College Student Journal, 8:71-74, November-December, 1974.

Kowalski and Cangemi characterized four primary factors for dropouts: low reading ability, low IQ, low socio-economic status, and parents who were formerly dropouts. Other related factors cited by the authors were: low scholastic aptitude, dislike of school, unhappy family situations and home pressures, frequent absence and tardiness, avoiding participation in extracurricular activities, performance below potential, lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem. Eight out of nine dropouts came from the lowest social class, and the majority had little interest in academic subjects.

Mahood, Wayne, "Born Losers: School Dropouts and Pushouts," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 65:54-57, January, 1981.

Mahood stated that the most significant reason for dropping out of school was poor reading ability. The inability to read led to failure. When success seemed impossible the student removed himself from the situation. Sometimes this procedure took place by simply signing a withdrawal slip from the office. Others became truant and still others made trouble in the school and were kicked out.

Sewell, Trevor E., and others, "High School Dropout: Psychological, Academic, and Vocational Factors," Urban Education, 16:65-76, April, 1981.

Sewell stated the purpose of the study was to investigate the psychological, academic, and vocational characteristics of high school dropouts. The subjects were 65 dropouts, 32 males and 33 females, who were classified as being of lower socio-economic status. On measures of intelligence, self-concept, and vocational maturity, the mean performance of dropouts was below that of the standard. The average IQ for the group, although lower than the mean of the general population, highlighted the fact that three-fourths of the dropouts were intellectually capable of performing at an average or above average level academically. The mean percentile for career maturity was lower than that of eleventh grade students. Whereas IQ was the only variable that made a significant contribution to reading, IQ and self-concept contributed significantly to arithmetic. The findings also showed the weak and nonsignificant relationships among the social, personality, vocational, and achievement variables. The lack was most evident in the failure of perceived social reinforcement and self-concept to relate consistently to achievement.

Smaby, Marlowe, and Anderson, Jerry, "Educational Alternatives Are Needed for Probable Dropouts," Pupil Personnel Services Journal, 4:13-18, Spring, 1975.

Smaby and Anderson cited important characteristics that were found to identify potential dropouts: consistent failure to achieve in school work, sixteen years of age or older, low reading ability, two or more years below grade level, retained at least once in elementary school, irregular attendance, frequent tardiness, and frequent changes of schools.

IMPACT OF DROPPING OUT

Income and Occupational Effects

Bachman, Jerald G., "Youth in Transition, Volume III: Dropping Out-Problem or Symptom?" Today's Education, 61:27-31, April, 1972.

When Bachman compared employed dropouts with employed graduates, the weekly income levels were almost identical. When dropouts and graduates were matched according to length of time on the job, no advantage for the graduate was found. Two-thirds of the graduates expressed satisfaction in their jobs while three-fourths of the dropouts rated themselves satisfied. Bachman concluded that the difference in unemployment rates was caused by family background and ability factors, not dropping out of school.

Hill, C. Russell, "Capacities, Opportunities, and Educational Investments: The Case of the High School Dropout," The Review of Economics and Statistics, 61:9-20, February, 1979.

Hill chose male individuals between the ages of 14 and 17 who were enrolled in high school in 1966 for a study to determine the effects of dropping out. By 1969, three percent of the white dropouts had re-enrolled but less than one percent of the non-whites were re-enrolled in high school. No significant racial differential in the earnings of graduates or dropouts was found. Both races suffered significant earnings disadvantages the first year after leaving high school but after that only a modest difference was noted in earnings between the dropout and the graduate.

Jones, William M., "The Impact on Society of Youths Who Drop Out or Are Undereducated," Educational Leadership, 34:411-416, March, 1977.

Jones presented statistics concerning income and expenditures for dropouts and pushouts. Nationally, males aged 25 to 34, lost 237 billion dollars in income. A total of 71 billion dollars was lost in government revenues in the form of taxes. Welfare expenditures to support the dropouts attributed to inadequate education cost 3 billion dollars a year. Another 3 billion dollars a year was estimated for cost of crimes related to inadequate education.

Redfering, David L., and Cook, Daryl, "Relationships Among Vocational Training, and Job Complexity of High School Dropouts and High School Graduates," Journal of Vocational Behavior, 16:158-162, April, 1980.

Redfering and Cook produced results of a study of high school dropouts and high school graduates and the relationships between income and job complexity level of the two groups. All groups selected were composed of 25 females and 25 males. Thirty percent were minority group members. Any type of organized training other than high school or college was defined as vocational training. Main effects showed that the completion of high school was not significantly related to yearly income, nor to job complexity. Vocational training was found to be significantly related to annual income. Dropouts who received vocational training tended to secure more complex jobs than high school graduates without vocational training as well as dropouts without vocational training. Dropouts without vocational training turned out only slightly worse than graduates without vocational training. However, dropouts without vocational training earned less and had less complex jobs than graduates and dropouts with vocational training. The results indicated that the mere act of dropping out was not the problem.

Young, Anne McDougall, "Changes in Youth Work Force," Monthly Labor Review, 102:34-38, October, 1979.

Young reported that a million youths not in school in October, 1978 were dropouts. The dropouts were 23 percent white, 36 percent black, and 54 percent Hispanic. Young emphasized the disadvantages of these youths compared to their peers who were high school or college graduates. The unemployment rate for dropouts in 1978 was more than double that of high school graduates and three times that of college graduates.

Social and Familial Effects

Bell, James W., "A Comparison of Dropouts and Nondropouts on Participation in School Activities," The Journal of Educational Research, 60:248-251, February, 1967.

Bell's study was designed to determine the relationship of participation in extracurricular activities and dropouts in high schools of varying enrollments. Each dropout was matched with a randomly chosen student of the same sex and grade level who stayed in school. The results showed that a lack of participation in school activities was a significant characteristic of the dropout. The smallest enrollment schools showed a larger participation in activities by the students. Participation was similar in the other sizes of schools. Sixty-eight percent of the dropouts were non-participators compared to only four percent for the nondropouts.

Felice, Lawrence G., and Richardson, Ronald L., "The Effects of Busing and School Desegregation on Majority and Minority Student Dropout Rates," The Journal of Educational Research, 70:242-245, May-June, 1977.

Felice and Richardson evaluated the effects of school desegregation by court-ordered busing on the dropout rate of majority and minority students. Research found majority dropout rates not affected by desegregation procedures. However, large differences in the dropout rate was found for minorities between various bused sections. This indicated highly uneven educational experiences for bused minority students. The authors concluded the benefits of busing to achieve school desegregation are conditional upon the socio-economic climate and the climate of teachers' expectations at that school. The result was a greatly reduced dropout rate if the minority students were bused to higher socio-economic climate schools and if more favorable expectations were held by the teachers.

Kelly, Delos H., and Pink, William T., "High School Dropout: An Analysis of Post-School Career Flows," Contemporary Education, 46:5-12, February, 1974.

According to Kelly and Pink, the level of social involvement had only a slight effect on the rate of high school dropouts, especially for failures. The class origin of a student had even less of an effect. Kelly and Pink, who examined 309 males in the Pacific Northwest, found that academic failure was the strongest predictor of high school dropouts. Kelly and Pink reported 33 percent of the failing sophomores dropped out compared to three percent of the students who were passing. Data presented also supported the idea that high school dropouts experienced seriously restricted post-school career options regardless of their class origins. Ninety-eight percent of the dropouts were not involved in higher education while 48 percent of the high school graduates were in school. Further, neither military nor work experience significantly assisted the dropouts from either the middle or working class in gaining entry to institutions of higher learning.

Tseng, M.S., "Comparisons of Selected Familial, Personality, and Vocational Variables of High School Students and Dropouts," The Journal of Educational Research, 65:462-465, July-August, 1972.

Tseng used 17 variables to determine if high school students and high school dropouts showed significant differences in home backgrounds, parental relations, personality attributes, and vocational behaviors. The study showed that dropouts had parents of lower educational levels and fathers' occupations were lower levels of difficulty, responsibility, and prestige. Dropouts received less encouragement from parents regarding education. Dropouts also perceived their fathers' attitudes toward them to be lower in acceptance and higher in avoidance. No significant differences were found between the groups on perception of fathers' attitudes relative to concentration, parental interest, fear of failure, and self-esteem. Dropouts chose occupations that had significantly lower levels of responsibility, difficulty, and prestige. Many of the dropouts were uncertain of their future occupations.

Effects of Teachers

Carranza, Elihu, "The Impact of Teacher Life Changes and Performance on Student Dropouts," Educational Research, 17:122-127, February, 1975.

Carranza assessed the relationship between the number of student dropouts and the life changes experienced by the teacher in conjunction with certain selected teacher performance variables. The study used 110 senior high teachers from Lansing, Michigan. Examples of life changes were marriage, divorce, death of spouse, and sex difficulties. Teacher performance variables were teacher absence-illness, absence frequency, absence duration, requests for transfer, number of job moves, number of students, number of classes, and percentage of student A's, B's, D's, and F's. The highest correlations were between student dropouts and number of students, number of classes, and percentage of D's and F's. The remaining significant correlations between student dropouts and transfer requests, teacher job moves, and percentage of A's and B's were negative. The greater the number of dropouts the less the percentage of student A's and B's, the less job moves experienced by the teacher, and the less the number of requests for transfer or reassignment. These data, together with the total life change scores of teachers, indicated a significant impact on student dropouts.

Richter, James, and Scandrette, Onas, "Relationship Between Teacher Personality Ratings and Student Academic Success," The Journal of Educational Research, 65:127-131, November, 1971.

The purpose of the authors' study was to determine to what extent teacher ratings of student personality were related to the academic success of pupils. Personality factors related were: motivation, industry, initiative, influence and leadership, concern for others, responsibility, integrity, and emotional stability. The study showed that students who dropped out of school had significantly lower personality ratings than the control group matched for sex and intelligence who remained to graduate. The most significant traits measured were in the areas of motivation, responsibility, emotional stability, and concern for others.

PROGRAMS FOR DROPOUTS AND POTENTIAL DROPOUTS

Alternative Programs

Bock, Frederick S., and Gomula, Wanda, "A Conservative Community Forms an Alternative High School," Phi Delta Kappan, 54:471-472, March, 1973.

Bock and Gomula, directors of the Monroe County Alternative High School in Bloomington, Indiana, described the program. The alternative high school, housed in a separate building, was non-graded, and participation was strictly voluntary. The program was a joint effort of the school corporation and Indiana University. Seventy-five percent of the pupils came from low-income families and 25 percent from middle-income families. Expenses for the program were kept to a minimum because undergraduate and graduate students were the teachers, along with regular math and reading teachers. The student-teacher ratio was about three to one. Individual help was provided for math and reading. According to the authors, standardized tests were given but there was a question about the validity because of the negative attitudes the students had about the tests. Success was indicated when two-thirds of the students returned to the alternative high school the following year. Other indicators of success were an absence of vandalism and serious discipline problems that existed in the conventional school setting.

Bock, Larry T., "Mini-School Eases Dropout Rate," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 62:111-112, December, 1978.

Bock developed a special mini-school for dropouts and potential dropouts that did not interfere with the regular scheduling of academic subjects. The program had several criteria: it had to be located inside the present building, teachers had to come from the present staff, it had to coincide with the regular program, student attendance was mandatory, and costs had to be kept to a minimum. Students in the class were pupils with poor attendance records, adjustment problems, emotional problems, and discipline problems. The program included 45 students and three teachers. The emphasis was on individualization. All the students attended three mini-classes as well as two regular classes. At the end of a six week period, about 40 percent of the students had been dropped from regular classes because of poor attendance, but still attended mini-school classes faithfully. By the end of the school year, the drop-out rate was only seven percent. The following year a work option was added for credit, and four subjects, instead of three, were offered.

Cendese, W. Ivan, "Valley High School: Dropout Prevention School," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 63:124-125, March, 1979.

Cendese explained Valley High School's dropout prevention school in Midvale, Utah. The students had the option of attending high school at night, four days a week. Students attended only those classes registered for, and the school operated on an open campus concept. Students were evaluated on accomplished work with credits applied upon completion of required materials. The curriculum was based on self-awareness, valuing, and development of responsibility with an emphasis on basic skills. The program was individualized and home tutors were provided. Credits were also earned by participation in out-of-school work and community experiences. After completion of state requirements, the students received regular high school diplomas.

Cutter, N. Craig, and Jones, Earl R., Evaluation of ESEA Title VIII Dropout Prevention Program, Project KAPS, ED 058 370, Baltimore City Public Schools, Maryland, August, 1971, 230 pp.

KAPS was Baltimore's effort to serve children and parents by reducing school dropouts. The four goals of the program were to increase attendance, increase achievement scores, to increase critical thinking skills, and to produce positive attitude changes. The pilot class was a team teaching experiment involving mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. A modification of day to day programs was aimed at helping students improve their cognitive skills while developing a healthy attitude and self-concept. Students were given points for completing work and payoffs included things as games, school supplies, or playing pool or ping pong. Remedial assistance in the math or reading lab was provided. Of the 439 participants measured, only 287 compiled 1970-1971 attendance rates equal to or higher than five percent above the 1969-1970 attendance rate. Goals were not met and poor planning and lack of teacher preparation were cited as possible causes.

Dauw, Edward G., "Separate Schools for Potential Dropouts," Educational Leadership Research Supplement, 5:333-340, January, 1972.

Dauw stated the purpose of the article was to share the results with other educators about the dropout prevention program in Pontiac, Michigan. The Individualized Instruction Program (IIP) measured school attendance, student achievement, dropout potential, dropout rate, and student self-concept. Thirty-six students were chosen from the regular high school in a matched sample with 36 from the IIP school. The assessment showed the program was effective in changing student behavior and in improving academic achievement. Attendance, when compared with the attendance of the regular high school group, significantly improved. The average score in reading comprehension grade placement was 8.7 for the IIP students and 7.6 for the regular group. Dropout potential was reduced. The dropout rate was 14.9 percent for the IIP students compared to 17.1 percent for the regular high school population. Student self-concept showed no significant gains. Individualized instruction, a separate facility, a comfortable setting and environment, a pupil-teacher ratio of 15 to one, small group discussions, and student participation were all cited as meaningful links between student and environment.

Dean, Kenny S., "A Plan to Save Dropouts: School-within-a-School," The Clearing House, 48:98-99, October, 1973.

Dean summarized a plan to save dropouts inaugurated in Paducah, Kentucky. A three-level range of courses were offered. Level One was for students who were planning on entering job training during or after graduation. Level Two, the school-within-a-school, was designed for most students who attend high school. Level Three was implemented for those planning to attend college. All students took the basic courses at their appropriate level. The students in the school-within-a-school program were not isolated from the other students. Counselors, teachers, and principals worked closely with each other. Not only did the dropout rate decrease significantly, but student failures also decreased markedly. In English and social studies only two percent failed compared to 32 percent and 42 percent before. The dropout rate was recorded at less than five percent after institution of the school-within-a-school program. Student morale greatly increased and low achieving students became involved in the total school program. The dropout rate had been 28 percent previous to the program.

Gibboney, Richard A., and Langsdorf, Michael G., "The Career Intern Program: An Experiment in Career Education That Worked," Journal of Research and Development in Education, 12:103-105, Spring, 1979.

Gibboney and Langsdorf researched a program developed by Opportunities Industrialization Corporation of America in Philadelphia. The Career Intern Program (CIP) was an alternative high school for 16-to-21-year olds who had dropped out of school or were potential dropouts. The goals of the program were to enable the pupil to finish high school, acquire occupational knowledge, plan a career, and improve basic math and reading skills. The CIP program was in three phases. Phase I, emphasizing improving students' career awareness, related math, English, social studies, and science to occupations. Phase II exposed the students to "hands-on" jobs that combined academic and career information. Phase III concentrated on the change over from school to work or to a more advanced education. Between January, 1974, and September, 1975, 67 percent of the students had graduated or were attending school. Standardized tests given, however, showed that 58 percent were reading at or below the seventh grade reading level.

Hinkley, Ed., "An Instructional Program for Dropouts," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 63:60-64, February, 1979.

Hinkley stated that the alternative school in Richmond, Indiana was a highly structured program intended to keep students in school who had thought about leaving. Hinkley reported that the first approach was to individualize learning. The teachers worked directly with students who had behavior or learning problems. A second technique was using a small group learning situation. Two to five students worked together and helped each other. According to Hinkley, structure was used to combat insecurity, rules were followed precisely, and discipline was enforced. The author emphasized the importance of not letting students become too dependent on the teacher but enough for security and trust. Hinkley noted that students were helped to realize that they made the choices about what happened to them. Teachers became personally involved with the students. Hinkley emphasized parent contacts and involvement. In conclusion, Hinkley listed several achievements of the program: the suspension rate was cut in half, attendance increased 10 percent, reading scores increased 1.4 years in three months, recorded better attitude and behavior, designed a program that met the needs of students, and gained support from personnel and parents.

Klein, William P., "The Continuing Education Center: An Alternative That Is Working," High School Journal, 61:111-118, December, 1977.

According to Klein, the Phoenix Union High School System began the Continuing Education Center (CEC) to keep potential dropouts in school. This alternative approach to education taught the basic skills as well as an awareness of career and vocational opportunities. Counseling played an important part of the program with counselors spending at least 20 percent of the time directly with the teachers. The program was individualized after a standardized test was given for skill level placement. A conference was set up and a contract offered based on the students' needs. The contract helped the students set objectives, define behavior, and measure achievement of skills. After finishing the prescribed work, the students retook the standardized test. Sixty-nine percent of the students received credit in at least 75 percent of the courses. The dropout rate for the 1974-1975 school year was 15.5 percent in the fall and 14.4 percent in the spring.

Sentelle, Sam P., "A Helping Hand for the Chronic Truant," Educational Leadership, 37:471-472, March, 1980.

Sentelle reported on an alternative program for chronic truants in Elizabethton, Tennessee. The school was not held in the regular school setting. Ten to 20 students were assigned to one teacher for the entire day. The teacher helped the students with assignments from the regular teachers. Emphasis on the individual was the key to the program. Time was spent in making up work missed while out of school. The program offered personal instruction, study help, and counseling. The student remained in the truancy program until able to demonstrate a pattern of regular attendance. When the student returned to the regular classroom, teachers reported a marked improvement in classroom performance in many cases.

Silverman, Stuart, "Project Focus: A Program for the Alienated," The Clearing House, 52:65-68, October, 1978.

Project Focus was an alternative school program housed at Deer Park High School in New York. Silverman proposed the project to help students who were alienated from school. The setting was two portable classrooms with 75 students enrolled. The idea came about when each teacher agreed to accept two more students in their regular classes. This, in turn, freed three teachers each day for the program and no additional costs for personnel had to be assessed the district. Profit from state aid was realized by improved attendance and reduced number of dropouts. The classes were four periods a day, a half day in Focus and a half day in mainstreamed classes. Requirements were the same for the mainstreamed classes as they were for the Focus classes. IQ's ranged from 67 to 105. Silverman emphasized the importance of the selection of teachers. They had to be able to empathize with the students and tolerate frustration. Students in the program showed an improvement in attitude. The students who were selected for the program negotiated their attendance and grading policy. Violation of any contracts, including behavior, resulted in going back to the regular full-time class routine.

Thornburg, Hershel D., "Attitudinal Determinants in Holding Dropouts in School," Journal of Educational Research, 68:181-184, January, 1975.

Thornburg evaluated a program for potential dropouts in a rural Arizona high school. Of the 154 students identified as potential dropouts, 36 were randomly selected for a special academic program and the remaining 118 were placed in vocational education classes. A control group of 94 students assigned to regular classes who were not potential dropouts were also studied. The special academic classroom was not designed to increase math and reading skills as much as it was to help students feel self-worth and gradually develop a positive attitude toward school through positive reinforcements. The vocational classes consisted of regular curriculum classes of home economics for girls and agriculture for boys. The program did show effective holding power since only 9.2 percent of the special academic students dropped compared to 18.6 percent of the vocational group and 12 percent of the control group. The study conclusively demonstrated positive reinforcement techniques were an effective way to maintain attitudes toward school. While the special academic class maintained their attitude toward school with no drop occurring, the vocational classes showed a slight drop in attitude toward school and the control group showed a significant decrease.

Thurber, Mike, "Project Impact: Dealing with High-Risk Students," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 65:103, April, 1981.

Thurber directed a program for ninth and tenth graders at Torrington, Wyoming High School who were classified as "high-risk" students. The school had an enrollment of 500 students and reduced the dropout rate 45 percent in one year. Title IV Project Impact had four components. An alternative curriculum was set up for English, math, science, and social studies. The limit was 10 students in a class to allow for individualization. A Student Service Room (SSR) was provided and staffed by a social worker for counseling. A counselor also trained students to help with peer counseling. A three day in-service was held to help all involved in the program work with these students more effectively. The results were a decline from 7.1 percent to 2.4 percent in the dropout rate for ninth graders and a decline from 11 percent to 3.6 percent for tenth graders. The students passed 97 percent of their classes compared to 55 percent the year before. More positive attitudes toward school were also noted from this student group.

Counseling Programs

Block, Joel, "Effects of a Rational-Emotive Mental Health Program on Poorly Achieving, Disruptive High School Students," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 25:61-65, January, 1978.

Block examined the effectiveness of a rational-emotive mental health program with 40 male and female high-risk and failure-and-misconduct-prone students. The rational-emotive therapy emphasized the teaching and application of self-realization rules through role playing, small group discussion, and psychological homework assignments. Another group promoted better adjustment by teaching psychodynamic principles of behavior through presentations and discussions by the leader in a less structured and reflective style. Another group on the waiting list for treatment was the control. Comparisons were then made with the three groups. Grade point average, incidents of disruptive behavior, and class cuts were the dependent measures. The results revealed differences among the three groups. The rational-emotive group was significantly lower in incidences of disruptive behavior and class cuts and significantly higher in grade point averages than the others. The improvement was maintained over an extended period.

Davenport, Joy, and others, "Group Counseling with Potential High School Dropouts," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 56:510-512, April, 1978.

The authors stated the goal of the program was to keep students in school. Three teacher-facilitators (TF's) began the group counseling with 51 invited students who were recognized by the school as truants. The meetings were referred to as classes and did not use psychological terminology. The classes met during the regular school day. The TF's were supportive of the students' rights to express themselves with no pressures. The students noted that the sessions helped them realize some things about their home, school, and family life that they did not realize before. They also commented on how helpful and dependable the TF's were and that information was kept confidential. Records were kept of the number of official withdrawals from school. Of the 40 students who came to the sessions, 15 percent withdrew from school and five percent were absent for more than half a year. The data confirmed the hypothesis that if students persisted in attending the counseling sessions, they were likely to stay in school.

Erickson, Edsel, Final Report of the Evaluation of the 1970-1971 School-Home Contact Program. New York State Urban Education, ED 064 423, Teaching and Learning Research Corporation, New York, 1971, 92 pp.

Erickson stated the main purpose of this project was to send family assistants from the community into the homes of students who showed serious problems with absenteeism, adjustment, or achievement. The program served 15,000 potential dropouts. Home visits were made to teach parents what to expect from the schools and what parents could do to help their children adjust and achieve in school. Thirty-seven percent of the students in the program decreased their absenteeism. Nineteen percent of the students decreased their rate of class cutting. Eighty-seven percent of the initial students in the program were still in school. Little improvement was seen in English achievement. It was concluded that the program had little positive effect on academic achievement. Only 33 percent of the students showed a decrease in their failure while 66 percent did no better or did worse. Approximately 70 percent of the parents interviewed responded that their child was getting along better with teachers and other students and were more interested in school. The students viewed the program quite favorably and were influenced positively to conduct themselves better at school.

Musholt, Wayne, "Self-Concept and the Middle School," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 58:67-71, April, 1974.

Musholt summarized the findings of a program at Harlem Middle School that showed the significant and positive relationship between a student's self-concept and school performance. The study indicated that unsuccessful students maintained self-attitudes that were mostly negative. Students with negative self-images rarely performed well in school. In the Harlem Dropout Program teachers led homeroom circle discussions that focused on adolescent emotional and social adjustment. These discussions were an organized and orderly program with a definite curricular sequence for humanizing the middle school program. There were 15 students and one teacher who led the 25 minute homeroom discussions. Analysis of the program indicated that school attendance increased, student participation in activities improved, and school truancy decreased. The number of conduct problems also decreased. The program met the individual, psychological, and intellectual needs of early adolescents.

Smaby, Marlowe, and Anderson, Jerry, "Educational Alternatives Are Needed for Probable Dropouts," Pupil Personnel Services Journal, 4:13-18, Spring, 1975.

The purpose of the authors' study was to prevent potential dropouts from leaving school through goal-setting and action-oriented counseling. Potential dropouts numbering 102, 45 experimentals and 57 controls, were part of the study. The 45 experimentals were seen by the school's counselors and discussions were held about the student's school life. Counselors and students discussed responsibilities and goals and wrote down actions agreed upon. Students were encouraged to contact the counselors at any time. Only three of the 45 experimental students dropped from school during the treatment period, whereas 12 of the 57 control students receiving normal guidance services left during the same period. It was concluded by the authors that a significant number of potential dropouts who received outreach counseling stayed in school. There were no significant differences noted regarding attendance between the experimentals and controls.

Stoker, Joan, Grab HOLD: Help Overcome Learner Dropouts, A Classroom Guidance Manual, ED 203 255, Pajaro Valley Unified School District, Watsonville, California, 1980, 146 pp.

Stoker reported that HOLD was a prescriptive counseling program for high school. A major component was the attendance program. Students met daily with a counselor. Students carried cards to each class and the teacher marked whether the student was to class on time and completed assigned work. The guidance counselor was cited as the person with the key role. Parents were contacted regularly and were encouraged to reinforce at home. Teachers reinforced the student daily and provided feedback to the counselor. After a three week period a letter of congratulations was sent home and an award given to the student. After the card was carried for six weeks, one day a week, the students had the opportunity to take charge of their own attendance. The counselors made use of community agencies by referring students with behavioral problems that were beyond the treatment scope of the school. After three years, 72 percent of the potential dropouts were still enrolled in high schools. More than half of the chronic truants had no unexcused absences in the third year. There was a 66 percent gain in the number of credits earned, not to mention the increased self-esteem.

Peer Group Programs

Arnhart, Warren N., and Duranceau, Jack L., "But Student Committees Can Cut Peer Violence," American School Board Journal, 166:36-37, January, 1979.

Arnhart and Duranceau reported on a project at Denny Junior High in Seattle, the scene of an experiment to cut peer violence to help reduce the number of dropouts. Students were allowed to become problem solvers and peacemakers. A Rumor and Conflict Committee of 20 members was initiated and made up of "streetleaders" of the school. The students worked on problems during the school day that developed. Only two students were called at a time because teachers said some students were missing too much class time and getting behind in work. Not only did the committee help solve problems, it was a status symbol to be a committee member. On a usual day the members were called once or twice. The program worked because students cut through the name calling and were able to talk to one another more freely than to adults. Most of the conflicts were blamed on peer pressure. Not once in the four years of the program did a student complain of unfair treatment by committee members. The program worked because of trust between committee members and administration, the willingness of the administration to share the power with students, and the selection of the pupils for the committees. The result was less violence and fear and more learning going on in the classroom.

Hammontree, Tom, "Profile of a Dropout," Florida Vocational Journal, 3:26-28, April, 1978.

According to Hammontree, success was met at Florida's Coral Gables Senior High since an occupational specialist was added to the staff in 1974. Dropout rates decreased from 10 percent in 1974 to 4.4 percent in 1977. A placement specialist kept track of student records to note those students who displayed characteristics of potential dropouts or who conformed to the student profile. The assistant principal initiated a program for peer-group counseling. Students who were referred to the office for discipline or attendance problems were assigned to a peer-counseling group. The placement specialist worked with the attendance office to watch for students who appeared to be developing patterns of truancy. Attendance office personnel referred students to the placement office who might benefit from job information or career guidance. The school psychologist was also involved in the process of keeping students in school by giving advice and helping students.

Vocational Programs

Heffez, Jack, "Employment and the High School Dropout," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, 64:85-90, November, 1980.

Heffez presented the YIEP, the Youth Incentive Entitlement Project, an employment program for disadvantaged youth from specified residential areas. These youths agreed to return to high school and continue their education. The program was for youths aged 16 to 19 from poverty level incomes. Participants received 10 hours weekly employment during school and 30 hours a week during the summer. The control group received no employment. The YIEP treatment group realized an insignificant increase in both grade point average score and rate of attendance means during the first year of the program. The control group scored a decrease in both areas. Heffez emphasized that employment alone was not the panacea for the dropout problem, but the results definitely could not be dismissed entirely.

Palmo, Artis J.; Buehle, Paul; and Osswald, Helene, "A Career Awareness Program for High School Dropouts," Journal of Employment Counseling, 17:277-286, June, 1980.

The Career Awareness Program (CAP) determined the effect of a concentrated vocational assessment and vocational counseling program on the employability of dropouts. The authors described various aspects of CAP which included individual and group counseling, job attitude training, vocational-educational assessment, diagnosis, and guidance, and career exploration. Videotaping and role playing were used to improve interviewing skills such as physical appearance, voice qualities, and personal attitudes. The dropouts reported an increased awareness of their own needs, abilities, and interests as well as having learned about job skills and behaviors desired by employers. The evaluation of the program showed that approximately 62 percent of the dropouts were working in full-time positions six months following completion of the program. Only three of the 21 participants left the program before completion.

Work-Study Programs

Gorman, Carl G., "Sheltered Workshop Prepares Potential Dropouts for On-the-Job Training," American Vocational Journal, 53:42-44, March, 1978.

According to Gorman, The Occupational Laboratory Achievement Program in the Warren, Ohio city schools was developed so that disadvantaged youth, given purposeful educational experiences, developed employable skills, technical knowledge, and good work habits and attitudes. The in-school sheltered workshop focused on youth who had lost interest or were underachieving in their school studies. These students had an IQ range between 79 and 90, and were at least one year behind academically. The instruction was individualized and enrollment limited to 20 students per teacher. The program produced truck caps for a local dealership. The school laboratory was organized on a production line basis. Students spent three hours a day, five days a week in the lab. To meet requirements for graduation, the students took two required English and history classes. Motivation was achieved through point evaluation systems. The students earned money when the caps were sold according to the number of points earned. Success of the program was evident by the positive ratings received from employers after leaving the program.

Hakanen, Lauri John, "The Stride Program: An Answer to Absenteeism," Phi Delta Kappan, 59:348-349, January, 1978.

Hakanen described the Stride Program (Students and Teachers Really Interested in Dropout Education) initiated in Rockford, Illinois. The chief purpose of the program was to turn potential dropouts back on to school. It was also hoped that students attend school voluntarily, achieve academic success, and improve negative self-images. The program, with 15 to 20 students, was set up to be rehabilitative so that students could be returned to regular classes. The students remained in the program on a semester basis. Credits earned were applied to graduation and athletic eligibility. The students dealt with one teacher and studied basic subjects three hours a day. The other half of the day was spent working a job outside school. The students were reported to no longer cause school disruptions. The students were found to be interested in school again and were developing some self-esteem. Hakanen emphasized the quality of the teachers as the key to the program. The indication of success was noted when students began to seek information about entrance into the program. The 1976-1977 evaluation of the program indicated the students liked the program because it helped them finish their education, they felt good about the program, and the future looked good instead of bad.

Hoyt, Jane Hauser, "The Story of Hard-Nosed Boston High," American Education, 12:10-14, March, 1976.

Hoyt examined Boston High School's "Second Chance Class," a two-year remedial program for high school boys. These potential dropouts were identified as poor achievers and some had discipline problems. The students went to school half the day and then to a job for four or more hours. The program had three main goals: improve academic abilities, strengthen the motivation of the students, and help students develop marketable job skills and desirable attitudes toward work. The program began with 38 students, four teachers, and nine cooperating businesses. The U.S. Office of Education funded the project. Attendance was mandatory and the rate was regularly 90 percent. Vocational aptitude tests were given to seniors to help them decide on a career choice. Some of the students moved into careers from the jobs. The keys to the program were dedicated teachers, a fifteen to one student-teacher ratio, and the positive reinforcement given to the students. About 10 percent of the school's graduates had gone on to college. No one graduated from the school without having a job lined up.

Hoyt, William, "Project Care: A Personalized Program," Catalyst for Change, 4:4-7, Spring, 1975.

Hoyt summarized Project Care, a personalized program focused primarily on developing self-concept and attitude. In 1972, Westside High School teachers chose students that had poor grades, poor attendance, skipped school, and lacked interest in activities to participate in the pilot project. Ten teachers were selected to work in the program; each counseled 20 students. The teachers spent six to eight hours during the summer with each student and parents in an effort to develop the best educational program for the student. The teachers worked out a personalized program which received a commitment from each student and parent. Teachers reworked the schedules in order to assign the students to specific teachers or classes or to arrange the schedule so the student could participate in work-study programs. Hoyt concluded that a change in self-concept was found to have a significant positive relationship with change in attitude toward school.

Keller, Arnold J., "Career Education: Success for the Potential Dropout," The Clearing House, 51:70-72, October, 1977.

Keller summarized a pilot project developed for junior high students in the New York City public schools for those identified as potential dropouts. The Cooperative Education program (CE) was a program combining work experiences and career awareness with classroom instruction in related subject areas. The goals of the program were: counseling students about career and educational goals, helping students develop healthy self-images and positive attitudes, and teaching students appropriate personal habits. The students attended classes in the morning and worked in the afternoon at various job sites for a minimum of ten hours per week for credit. The data revealed that school attendance and punctuality were increasing dramatically while the dropout rates and the cutting of classes were decreasing. Discipline had improved in these students. Positive effects in student interest and motivation were noted by the teachers. Reading tests revealed a climb in the reading scores, with some students improving by one or two grade levels.

Schmidt, Wesley I., and Dykeman, Bruce F., "Testing the Effectiveness of a Career Education Program for Potential Dropouts, Education, 99:287-290, Spring, 1979.

Schmidt and Dykeman reported on the Work Experience and Career Exploration Program (WECEP) which provided 14 and 15 year-old potential dropouts with a career program. Those schools having high dropout rates and high unemployment rates participated. The students were identified as potential dropouts because of their poor school attendance, high rate of behavioral problems, and low grade averages. These students were then placed either in the experimental (WECEP) or control group. WECEP students attended regular classes three or four hours a day and worked a job two hours a day. A career education class was also provided for each student. Credit was applied for both the work experience and the career class. Individual and group counseling was provided. The WECEP teachers visited the student at work and at home. The effectiveness of the program in reducing the number of dropouts was inconclusive. There was an increase in the number of days school was attended and an increase in the level of vocational maturity of the WECEP group. There was a decrease in the number of disciplinary referrals. No significant relationship between the career program and improvement in grades was found.

SUMMARY

Researchers Grant and Wacker indicated that approximately 25 percent of all students did not graduate from high school during the last several years. But Stoughton and Grady argued that serious flaws in current methods of predicting dropouts resulted in many not being counted in the tally. Lloyd proposed accurate methods of predicting dropouts as early as the third and sixth grades.

Many characteristics of dropouts were noted by researchers. According to Mahood, Kowalski, Cangemi, Hammontree, Smaby, and Anderson, poor reading ability was a primary factor for dropping out. Curley, Smaby, Anderson, and Hinkley found academic difficulty and failure as patterns of typical dropouts. According to Hewitt and Johnson's study, the dislike of school was the only reason given for dropping out 100 percent of the time. Dean, Kaplan, and Luck cited attendance problems as a main cause of leaving school. Lack of participation in extracurricular activities was found by Hewitt, Johnson, and Hammontree as characteristic of the dropout. Cottle reported millions of students who were being suspended became dropouts in the end. Many times unreported, Carriere concluded that peer violence was the reason many students left school. Hill, Kaplan and Luck pointed out that educational attainment of parents had a significant effect on dropping out. Sewell highlighted the fact that three-fourths of the dropouts were intellectually capable of performing at an average or above average level academically. Hammontree agreed by saying the students had the ability but did not apply it. Low self-concept was found significantly related to dropouts by Hammontree, Kowalski, and Cangemi. Sewell, however,

found that self-concept did not consistently relate to achievement.

Young reported that dropouts were at a distinct job disadvantage when compared to high school and college graduates. On the other hand, Redfering and Cook concluded that vocational training accounted for differences in income and job complexity. Whether the person was a high school graduate or a dropout was not the critical factor. Hill found significant earning disadvantages the first year after leaving high school, but after that only a modest difference was noted in earnings between the dropout and graduate.

Data presented by Kelly and Pink supported the idea that high school dropouts experienced seriously restricted post-school career options. According to Tseng, dropouts chose occupations that had significantly lower levels of responsibility, difficulty, and prestige. Jones claimed dropouts cost the government billions of dollars in tax revenues, welfare expenditures, and cost of crimes.

The study of teacher ratings of student personality by Richter and Scandrette showed that dropouts had lower personality ratings than those who graduated. Teacher life changes and teacher performance variables assessed by Carranza indicated a significant impact on the number of students dropping out.

Many alternative school programs were cited by authors as remedies for the dropout situation. Separate facilities for alternative high schools were noted by Dauw, Sentelle, Bock, and Gomula as being important in the success of the programs they studied. On the other hand, Thurber and Hinkley reported successes in self-contained classrooms with an emphasis on individualization. Students were given a choice of when to go to school in the

successful night school alternative program explained by Cendese. Bock, Silverman, and Dean found effective results in programs where students spent part of the day in special classes designed for the students' needs and the other part of the day in mainstreamed classes. The KAPS program evaluated by Cutter and Jones did not meet goals set forth at the beginning of the program. Poor planning and lack of teacher preparation were cited as the possible causes.

Erickson's study of a counseling program that used family assistants to help students adjust was 87 percent successful in keeping pupils in school. The HOLD program, as described by Stoker, combined teacher and counselor efforts in a successful undertaking that produced a 66 percent gain in the number of credits earned. Davenport's study showed group counseling was effective in curtailing school withdrawals. Hammontree and Arnhardt reported accomplishments using student peers as counselors.

Work-study programs accounted for many of the programs throughout the country to keep dropouts in school. All of the researchers described the work-study programs as going to school for half a day and working a job for half a day. Gorman judged the success of the sheltered workshop by the positive ratings received from employers. Keller noted positive effects in student interest and motivation with a marked improvement in reading scores. Schmidt and Dykeman reported a decrease in the number of disciplinary referrals, but no relationship between the program and improvement in grades was found.

CONCLUSIONS

From the research, it was concluded that many students are still dropping out of school. Children began showing signs of dropout characteristics in elementary school.

Poor reading ability was cited more often than any other characteristic by the researchers as the reason for dropping out. Other characteristics cited were a dislike of school, academic difficulty and failure, attendance problems, and lack of participation in extracurricular activities. Educational attainment of the parents, number of retentions in school, suspensions, and peer violence were also found to have an effect on the number of dropouts.

Researchers disagreed as to how important a high school diploma was to obtain a job with a good income. Young concluded it was important while Hill said it was only important in the first year. Other researchers concluded that vocational training was the answer for both the dropout and the high school graduate. Data presented by other researchers stated dropouts did not have much of a selection of job careers, and dropouts cost the federal government billions of dollars each year in expenditures.

Many programs for the dropout and potential dropout were explored and evaluated. Most of the alternative schools, whether they were self-contained classrooms, classrooms outside the regular school buildings, or night schools, reported success but in various areas. Successful counseling programs worked mostly on building self-concept and family relationships. Peer counseling was also cited by the researchers as being effective. Work-study programs accounted for much of the research. The course of action taken by

the implementers determined how successful the program would be. All the programs emphasized the importance of individualization for the students. Careful planning and the selection of teachers for the programs were also deemed very critical areas.

Educators and parents have realized the impact dropouts have had on society and the students themselves. With all the help that has been given, the problem has not been solved. No matter how much educators have revamped, psychologists have counseled, parents have loved and encouraged, the students still have the final responsibility in completing their education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. More accurate methods be developed for producing the dropout rate to include all students who leave school at any time, at any grade level, prior to graduation.
2. Teachers be given more in-service training for working with the potential dropout, especially when implementing new programs.
3. Alternative or work-study programs be initiated to help potential dropouts before they reach high school, and even as early as the elementary years.
4. Dropping out of school require more than signing a withdrawal slip. Conferences between parents, counselor, principal, and student be held to make every attempt for workable alternatives to dropping out.
5. A greater emphasis be placed on reading problems in elementary school and positive actions taken to solve the problem. A coordinated progress sytem, maintained and updated on a regular basis, should be instituted. The cumulative record could be used not only to describe problems but also to log follow-up, remedial procedures, and progress.
6. Each school develop a dropout profile to identify potential dropouts and take steps to keep the students in school or direct them to appropriate activities.
7. Parents be involved through home contact programs in the planning and implementation of dropout programs.

8. Further research be done to find out why so many students are being suspended from school, what overall effects these suspensions have on students and schools, and what possible alternatives to suspension could be contemplated by administrators.
9. Administrators consider curriculum and activity changes to meet the needs of the potential dropout.
10. Career flows and income levels of dropouts be examined over a more extended period of time than just one or two years.
11. Research evaluate the effect of the leadership of the principal on student performance and dropout rate.
12. State and local agencies award monies to schools and their communities so that innovative programs can be planned and implemented for dropouts and potential dropouts.
13. A school curriculum be provided which motivates a greater number of children and adolescents and based on a continuous progress, individualized approach. Community involvement, including vocational and pre-vocational experiences, would be an integral component.
14. A rebate system be considered whereby the public guarantees every citizen at least 12 years of schooling. The student can exercise the option to use the 12 years before age 18 or at any later date.

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